



Campaign underway for Army Emergency Relief

By Melanie Casey

The annual Army Emergency Relief campaign is once again underway. The Armywide fund-raising effort began March 1 and will conclude May 15.

During this time, the 6th Area Support Group hopes to exceed last year's contribution of \$25,000.

What is AER?

Army Emergency Relief is a private, nonprofit organization founded in 1942 by the secretary of war and the Army chief of staff. AER's mission is to provide emergency financial assistance to soldiers.

The fund is affiliated with the American Red Cross, Air Force Aid Society, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Auxiliary and the Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Office.

Who does AER help?

AER assistance is available for the following people:

- active-duty soldiers and their dependents
- reservists on active duty for more than 30 days
- retired soldiers and their dependents
- surviving spouses and orphans of soldiers who died while on active duty or after they retired.

Since it was established, AER has helped more than 2 million soldiers and distributed more than \$836 million.

In 2002 alone, AER assisted 52,000 soldiers and gave more than \$38 million. More than \$33 million of that went to active-duty soldiers and their families.

AER also contributes to undergraduate-level education via scholarships to spouses and children of soldiers.

In 1976, AER merged with the Army Relief Society, which assisted widows and provided scholarships for dependent children.

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How does AER help?

Army Emergency Relief can help with temporary financial needs relating to food, rent and utilities, emergency transportation and vehicle repair, funeral expenses, medical and dental care and personal needs when pay is delayed or stolen.

Money is given in the form of an interest-free loan, a grant (if repayment of a loan will cause undue hardship) or part loan, part grant.

How is AER funded?

AER does not receive appropriated or non-appropriated government money. Its funds are generated by voluntary contributions, repayment of AER loans and investment income.

For every dollar contributed to Army Emergency Relief, 96 cents goes toward helping soldiers.

For details call Capt. Eric Tangeman, the 6th Area Support Group AER campaign coordinator, at 421-2826/civ. 0711-729-2826 or e-mail tangemana@6asg.army.mil.

Air Force Assistance Fund also seeks contributions

Air Force News Service

The Air Force Assistance Fund's "Commitment to Caring" campaign runs through May 9. Officials ask airmen to contribute to one or more of four Air Force-related charities via cash, check or payroll deduction.

The charities benefit active-duty, Reserve, Guard and retired Air Force personnel, surviving spouses and families. Charities receive 100 percent of AFAF contributions.

"Requests for assistance are up more than 13 percent since Sept. 11, 2001, while the investments that fund 70 percent of our programs are down 20 percent," said retired Lt. Gen. Mike McGinty, Air Force Aid Society's chief executive officer.

"In 2002, we helped 34,000 people with \$24.1 million of assistance. That's a lot of help."

The following charities fall under the AFAF umbrella:

■ **The Air Force Aid Society** is the official charitable organization of the Air Force. It provides emergency financial assistance, education assistance and an array of community-enhancement programs. Information is avail-

able online at www.afas.org.

■ **The Air Force Enlisted Foundation** at Fort Walton Beach, Fla., provides rent subsidy and other support to indigent widows and widowers of retired enlisted people 55 and older. More information is available at www.afenlistedwidows.org.

■ **The Air Force Village Indigent Widow's Fund** supports a life-care community for retired officers, spouses, widows or widowers and family members. The Air Force Village's Web site is www.airforcevillages.com.

■ **The General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation** provides rent and financial assistance to indigent widows and widowers of officers and enlisted people in their own homes and communities. The LeMay Foundation Web site is www.info@lemayfoundation.org.

Contributions to the AFAF are tax deductible as itemized federal deductions.

For more information visit www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/votefund. In Stuttgart call Capt. Darin Sanner at 430-8354/civ. 0711-680-8354 or e-mail darin.sanner@cmtymail.6asg.army.mil.

Stuttgart Beat

Force protection notices

■ During heightened force protection conditions, the **Kelley Barracks back gate** will be closed.

■ Effective immediately, the 6th Area Support Group commander has directed the suspension of all off-post physical training. This includes military and civilian formations as well as individual activities.

Stuttgart-area changes, updates

■ Due to recent deployments **Panzer and Kelly Army post offices** have been closed until further notice. The Patch APO will now be open Mondays to Fridays, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Robinson Barracks APO hours will remain unchanged.

■ The **Panzer Dining Facility** is now open Mondays to Fridays during the following hours only: 7:30 to 9 a.m. (breakfast) and 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. (lunch).

■ **Patch and Kelley fitness centers** have increased their weekday operating hours. The facilities are now open Mondays to Fridays from 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

ACS limits employment services

Stuttgart's Army Community Service will be offering limited Employment Program services for the next few weeks.

Classes will still be offered every Tuesday, but because of staffing changes appointments will be necessary for all other help. For details call 430-7176/civ. 0711-680-7176.

CPAC visits to be 'appointment only'

Effective April 1, Stuttgart's Civilian Personnel Advisory Center will see clients on an appointment-only basis.

Employees and managers may call for an appointment 24 hours before the preferred time, thereby eliminating an unnecessary waiting period and allowing human resources representatives time to prepare.

For details call 421-2665/civ. 0711-729-2665.

Tax center offers free services

The Stuttgart Tax Center, located in the new home of the Stuttgart Law Center (Kelley Barracks, building 3312, second floor), is open and ready to assist community members with their 2002 tax returns.

The tax center is open Mondays to Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with extended hours (until 6:30 p.m.) Thursdays.

Appointments are encouraged, but walk-in clients are accepted until 3:30 p.m. For details call 421-4588/civ. 0711-729-4588.

EO needs committee volunteers

The 6th ASG Equal Opportunity office is seeking volunteers to plan the May 16 Asian/Pacific Islanders Heritage Month event. The committee's first meeting is March 26 at noon in the Patch Community Club.

For details call Sgt. 1st Class Carey Williams at 421-2892/civ. 0711-729-2892 or e-mail williamsc@6asg.army.mil.

Tobacco cessation classes start

The Stuttgart Wellness Center's next six-week series of tobacco cessation classes begins March 25. Classes are held Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to noon, in the Wellness Center classroom (Patch Barracks, building 2307, second floor).

For details call 430-8209/civ. 0711-680-8209.

Home schoolers hold science fair

The Stuttgart Area Home Schoolers will hold a science fair March 31, 3 to 5 p.m., in the International Baptist Church, Stuttgart. This event will substitute for the March monthly meeting – the next SAHS monthly meeting is April 28.

For details about the fair contact Mrs. Armstrong at 0711-907-6228 or Madelyn Johns at 0712-723-7088.

Crusaders for Christ perform, recruit

Crusaders for Christ, an all-girl dance troupe in the Stuttgart area, will perform routines to hip-hop and praise music March 29 at 2 p.m., in the Patch Theater.

The group welcomes new members between the ages of 6 and 18. No formal dance training is required.

For show or membership information call Sofia Bonano at 0711-674-2741 or e-mail bonano77@hotmail.com.

Project Partnership packages due

U.S. partnership units are responsible for submitting awards packages to the U.S. Army, Europe, Partnership Office by March 31. The awards will be presented Sept. 17.

For details call Ulysses Harris at 475-6792/civ. 09641-83-6792 or e-mail ulysses.harris@hq.7atc.army.mil.